



**131st Legislature
Joint Select Committee on Housing**

Testimony of Laura Mitchell, Executive Director of the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition

January 23, 2024

**In favor of LD 337- An Act to Amend the Regulations of Manufactured Housing to Increase Affordable Housing
- sponsored by Rep. Cheryl Golek**

Good afternoon, Senator Pierce, Representative Gere, and esteemed members of the Joint Select Committee on Housing, my name is Laura Mitchell, I serve as the Executive Director of the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition.

The Maine Affordable Housing Coalition (MAHC) is a nonprofit membership organization of more than 140 Maine housing development, architecture, construction, design, engineering, shelter, and housing services organizations. We work to solve Maine's housing crisis by advocating for the creation and preservation of housing for all people in Maine.

MAHC is sharing this testimony today in favor of LD 337, An Act to Amend the Regulations of Manufactured Housing to Increase Affordable Housing sponsored by Representative Cheryl Golek. This bill will expand access to naturally occurring affordable housing in Maine. As you know, Maine needs more than 80,000 new homes by 2030.

On average, building a new stick built home in Maine takes more than a year and costs are in the \$300,000 plus range. The time and cost of building a home in Maine has become out of reach for the majority of our workforce and our aging residents that want to downsize or live in more accessible housing. We are losing our workforce, economic growth opportunities, and the cultural fabric of our state if stick built is the primary pathway to building new homes.

Manufactured housing addresses these issues. Maine needs to make manufactured housing universally an option for residents. LD337 provides that pathway. This bill also helps municipalities better utilize manufactured housing as an affordable housing tool by overcoming old stigmas against mobile homes that prohibit them in many local zoning codes.

As you know, Maine is in a housing crisis and demand outstrips supply. This imbalance is only predicted to increase. **Producing new affordable housing is vital and we need the state to support options that residents themselves can build, such as manufactured housing, because Federal and state subsidized programs can only go so far.** LD337 can help meet Maine's need for housing.

Thank you.

Laura Mitchell
Maine Affordable Housing Coalition
LD 337

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